



The Voice of the Human Services Community

HUMAN SERVICES COUNCIL OF NEW YORK

THE HIGHEST VALUE IN HUMAN SERVICES: Treating People with Dignity and Respect

HSC places the highest value on the capacity of human services organizations to treat all people who require services, as well as all staff who provide services, with dignity and respect and to appreciate the inherent worth of each individual.

HSC puts a premium on being mindful of individual differences, cultural and ethnic diversity, and in striving to achieve equity in both practices and outcomes.

HSC recognizes that the public generally supports funding for the wide array of human services, including a degree of income support. Nevertheless, at same time bias and stigma exist against individuals who require services.

HSC recognizes that the people who utilize or otherwise require services often have limited power to influence the social policies and political circumstances that shape the conditions of their lives, and are often stigmatized because of their position or circumstances because of systemic bias by other groups who do not understand or approve of who they are.

It is in this context that HSC recognizes that there has been historic and systemic bias toward individuals, families and communities in the following groups, and that this needs to be acknowledged and addressed. (The listing below is for illustration and may not be exhaustive.)

HSC also recognizes that individuals, families and communities may be stigmatized by one or more of these identifications.

1. People of color, whose lives are affected by historic, structural racism (See HSC's statement: "Commitment to Racial Equity," May, 2013)
2. People who are poor, of limited income, underemployed or out of work
3. Members of the LGBTQ community, including individuals who are questioning their sexual identity and orientation
4. People who are older (or appear to be)
5. People whose gender, or association with groups that are affiliated with a certain gender, place them in the less powerful group



The Voice of the Human Services Community

6. People whose religious affiliation is not acceptable or usual for the dominant majority
7. People who are mentally or cognitively impaired or dealing with difficult emotional and social issues
8. People with disabilities
9. People with many types of acute, chronic or terminal illnesses, including HIV/AIDS and cancer
10. People with limited education and literacy
11. Immigrants and people who have limited English proficiency or accents
12. People who have been incarcerated
13. People with addictions

HSC places a high value on ensuring that all leaders and staff in human services organizations understand the impact of individual, institutional and systemic bias on service delivery and on each other and that steps be taken to educate the sector to ameliorate the consequences of this bias, and where possible, eliminate it.

Passed unanimously by the HSC Board of Directors at its November 13, 2014 meeting.